

NCCFW CARES Act Grant Application FAQs

Please keep in mind: There are grey areas in determining allowability and generally, the more one is familiar with the operation of the centers, the better position one is in to determine if these costs are allowable. Written justification for costs that may be necessary, but are less obvious as why they are due to COVID-19, is a good first step. Include justification in your scope of work.

All expenses must be new and the result of the COVID-19 pandemic, incurred and paid for during the grant period, and not accounted for in other grant budgets.

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Questions and Answers:

1. Who is eligible?

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Programs currently eligible for state funding through the Department of Administration/NC Council for Women & Youth Involvement.

2. How much funding will my agency receive?

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CENTERS: Currently each agency will be eligible to receive \$56,603.00

SEXUAL ASSAULT Dual agencies will receive \$50,649.00*

SEXUAL ASSAULT Stand-alone agencies will receive \$95,454.00*

Upon approval of application, programs will receive 100% of the funding up front.

*Funding will be distributed to SA agencies in accordance with the NCGS which identifies 65% to dual agencies and 35% to stand alone agencies.

a. Are the funding amounts per county or per program?

Funding **amounts** are per program. However, if your program serves more than one county and **currently** receives multiple state grants from NCCFW, then you are eligible to receive multiple CARES Act grants. For example, if you are a single agency that serves 4 counties and you receive state grants for each of these counties, you are eligible to apply for 4 CARES Act grants.

b. Do dual agencies receive both the DV and the SA money?

Yes, they receive both if they fill out two applications.

c. Can we apply for less money?

Yes – BUT we encourage you to think creatively about ways that you could use this funding to help your clients. Contact NCCASA or NCCADV if you need help brainstorming potential uses for the funding, or browse the resources on our website.

3. How can the funding be spent?

There are three primary criteria for the Coronavirus Relief Funds (the wording below is from the U.S. Treasury guidance which governs the use of these funds):

- I. Necessary expenditures that have been incurred due to public health emergency, the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
- II. Costs were not accounted for in the budget for the State or government most recently approved as of March 27th, 2020 (the date of enactment of the CARES Act); and
- III. COVID-19 expenditures incurred between March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020.*

Funds must be spent by December 30, 2020.*

*This date was set in the Federal legislation that created these funds. Any funds unspent as of that date must revert to the State, which will then send them back to the U.S. Treasury. However Covid-19 related expenses dated back to March 1, 2020 are allowed.

a. Can the funding be used for PR related expenses?

Yes – as long as you can demonstrate that the expenses were needed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, you need to fund new outreach strategies to reach survivors during the pandemic. This could include hiring consultants or paying new or current staff to perform these duties. This could also include purchasing print materials, such as billboards, to reach clients because COVID-19 has changed traditional outreach methods. This must not overlap with funds from other grants that may be allocated to PR related expenses.

b. Can these funds be used for payroll expenses, such as salaries, benefits and hazard pay to staff?

Yes – payroll costs including salaries and benefits, hazard pay and overtime costs are allowed IF your agency allows for Hazard Pay in your policies or bylaws, AND the expense is related to COVID-19. Recipients may apply the Fund to cover portions of payroll and benefits for employees corresponding time spent on COVID-19 administrative work necessary due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Be sure that you are not supplanting these funds from other grants. Hazard pay policies must be uniform across all of your employees in your written policies. The fund CANNOT be used for payroll bonuses or Medicaid expenses.

c. Can these funds be used for bonuses that are usually funded by fundraising, but due to the pandemic, we weren't able to fundraise?

No. Because the expense is not related to direct COVID-19 related costs or impacts, bonuses are not an allowable expense.

d. Can these funds be used for upfitting home offices, work offices, or other agency-related spaces?

Yes – if the expenses are related to COVID-19, they are allowable. For example, these funds may be used for Zoom fees, Docusign fees, installing no-touch appliances, purchasing equipment for staff teleworking, renovations to create 6' separation or physical barriers, telecounseling, equipment and supplies needed, etc.

e. Can these funds be allocated to auditing expenses?

Yes, as long as you have not already accounted for auditing expenses in another grant and as long as the expenses are incurred and paid during the grant period. *For exception, see 2.o.*

f. Can we use the funds to backpay things we already paid for?

Yes – ONLY IF you are not supplanting funds from another grant. It is a good idea to check with your auditor to make sure you are not supplanting if you want to backpay.

g. Can these funds be used to purchase, lease, or upgrade vehicles to transport clients?

You must be able to clearly demonstrate that 1.) this is a new and unexpected cost, 2.) it isn't accounted for anywhere else, 3.) there are no other options to transport clients, AND 4.) the need for this transportation is directly related to COVID-19. You must be prepared to make this justification and explanation to the auditor.

h. What do we do with unused money?

Unused money must be returned to the federal government. We encourage agencies to think creatively about how to use funds to help clients.

i. Can these funds be used for tutors or educational support for children of clients who may be trying to attend virtual school from a shelter or hotel?

Yes – as long as these expenses are directly tied to the COVID-19 crisis and are not supplanted from other grants.

j. Can these funds be used for gas cards, utility bills, rent payments, cell phones, hotel rooms, etc.?

Yes – if these expenses are incurred as a direct result of COVID-19, and agencies must be able to **clearly demonstrate** that monies are being spent as intended. If clients are unable to pay for these expenses because they were laid off due to COVID-19, that would be an allowable expense. Agencies should consider directly paying bills or buying gas cards in order to provide a paper trail of expenses rather than giving clients money directly.

k. Can these funds be used for children of agency staff who are learning from home?

No. Because the funds are not being used to support survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault, this is not an allowable expense.

l. Can these funds be used for fundraising or to replace lost fundraising revenue?

No. Because the funds are not being used to support survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault, this is not an allowable expense. Revenue replacement is not allowable.

m. My payroll date for December is Dec. 31st. Can I spend funds CARES Act funds until then?

No, the date of December 30, 2020 is set by Session Law 2020-4. Only expenditures incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020, are eligible for funding from the CARES Act.

n. What exact date in March should I use for back dating related expenditures?

March 1st, 2020 – CARES Act funds can be used to reimburse non-profit agencies for expenses already incurred dating back to 3/1/2020, assuming expenses are directly

related to COVID-19 and are eligible based on requirements set by the federal government.

o. Can I use funds to pay for services to be delivered after December 30, 2020?

No – Encumbered and/or obligated funds as of December 30, 2020 may be allowed if the cost was incurred by December 30, 2020. Selected administrative expenses are allowed after Dec 30, 2020, such as: expenses incurred to comply with the Single Audit Act and reporting and recordkeeping requirements imposed by the Office of Inspector General ([See US Treasury Guidance](#)).

p. Can these funds be used for administrative costs, such as facilities operation and maintenance costs?

No. Payments from the Fund are not administered as part of a traditional grant program and provisions of the Uniform Guidance of 2 C.F.R. Part 200 that are applicable to indirect costs do not apply. **Recipients may not apply payments of indirect administrative costs** i.e. facilities or costs incurred for a common purpose benefitting more than one cost objective. Only indirect administrative costs that can be directly identified to the COVID-19 crisis and related activity is allowable.

q. Is pre-payment for services that will be provided after Dec. 30th allowed?

No. Prepayment for goods or services is not allowed.

r. Are capital improvements, like roof replacement for a shelter, allowable?

If the expense is directly related to COVID-19 and the expenditure is incurred during the grant period, it is an allowable expense. *Note: if the audit determines it is not an allowable expense, funds will be recovered.*

s. Are utility expenses for the agency incurred during the grant period allowable expenses?

No – general maintenance, such as utilities, are an operating budget item and not allowable.

t. Can these funds be used to replace revenue lost from thrift stores or to upfit thrift stores?

These funds CANNOT be used to replace lost revenue. However, if you are upfitting the thrift store in order to make it safer during COVID-19, and it directly relates to your agency serving clients (i.e. in outreach or providing information), then that is allowable.

u. If we are purchasing a subscription or entering into a contract that runs over the grant period (i.e. Zoom annual contract or billboard yearly contract), is this allowed?

If these things are incurred due to COVID-19, are not included in other grant budgets, AND the service occurs and is paid for during the grant period, it is allowed. It is preferable that services only occur during the grant period. Consider discussing this with your auditor for clarification. You will be required to make this justification in an audit.

v. Is there a cap on administrative expenses?

Administrative expenses should not exceed 20% of the grant funds.

w. Is Sales Tax an allowable expense?

No – Tax assistance is not allowed according to the U.S. Treasury Guidance.

x. Can I pay for services such as modifying my shelter to build a bathroom to help clients shelter in place with safety?

Only if the work is finished and paid for by the end of the grant period (December 30th). Keep in mind the days left in the year before engaging in big projects like this. Services must be complete by December 30th.

y. Can funds be used for contracts with vendors to promote availability of services during the pandemic such as billboards require 12 month contract? Although billboards will begin before 12.30.20, the requirement by the vendor may require for a 12 month contract which means the billboard will continue after the end of 2020. Is this considered pre-payment?

If the 12-month contract is required, it seems reasonable that this is allowable. The auditor will need to see documentation in the contract that a minimum 12 months is required. Exceptions to the guidance such as this should be reviewed by the State including a review of the contract showing the 12-month requirement.

z. Are subscriptions such as Zoom for telehealth or meeting platforms that are purchased as annual subscriptions allowed since this is pre-paid for a service that an agency will begin using prior to Dec. 30, 2020 but continue using into 2021? The subscription will be paid for in 2020.

If the entity can get a monthly subscription that expires on or close to December 30, rather than a 12-month subscription, it would be allowable, as usage into 2021 is not allowable, given that it can be tracked and recorded when the service is used.

aa. Can we purchase and pay for furniture and storage shed for clients when some of the furniture will be used after December 30?

Goods delivered in the covered period need not be used during the covered period in all cases. For example, the cost of a good that must be delivered in December in order to be available for use in January could be covered using payments from the Fund.

ab. Can we purchase supplies such as food for clients in bulk if some of those items will be used in January?

The cost of goods purchased in bulk and delivered during the covered period may be covered using payments from the Fund if a portion of the goods is ordered for use in the covered period, the bulk purchase is consistent with the recipient's usual procurement policies and practices, and it is impractical to track and record when the items were used.

ac. Our organization contracts with an agency to employ staff members. If these are not technically our employees, but employees of the hiring agency, would we still be able to pay hazard pay?

Yes, Employee Expenses (e.g. Payroll and benefits cost for employees that are dedicated to COVID-19) and Contracted Labor Expenses are allowed, as long as the work performed by the employees is between March 1 and Dec. 20, 2020 and is for direct services.

ad. What happens to excess funds if our agency does not request the full funding amount? Will it be redistributed to other agencies?

Your agency does not have to request the full funding amount on the application submitted by 9/30/2020. You are encouraged to work with your state coalition and potential vendors to identify all possible options considering the expected upturn in demand and current needs for transforming programming to serve survivors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unused funds will be returned to the State and US Department of Treasury.

ae. Would our agency be able to backpay hazard pay for employees who worked during the pandemic but no longer work for the agency?

No – hazard pay is allowed for current employees only.

af. Can the funds be used to recover match requirements from other grants (i.e. 20% required match by GCC)?

No – funds may only be used to cover costs NOT accounted for in your budget prior to March 1, 2020-December 30, 2020.

ag. What is the final deadline for Budget Transfer Requests?

The agency agrees to use the funds in the amounts allocated for the budget cost items set forth in the budget. Your agency may reallocate and/or redistribute items up to 20% in overall budget costs without the express written permission of CFWYI for this one-time fund. If your agency requires a budget transfer beyond 20%, you will need to submit an expenditure report beginning 30 days after receiving funds (Source: US Treasury).

4. How to apply?

Agencies should [download the application](#) on the CFW website and submit it to CFWHB1105CR_FUND@doa.nc.gov.

Application will only require brief description of the scope of work, budget and signatures verifying adherence to federal usage of funds. Applications will be due on September 30th, 2020.

Upon return and approval of your application, programs will receive 100% of the funds.

As with all state budgeted funds, dollars are working thru certification by OSBM (Office of State Budget Management). We anticipate an early October availability.

Final report on expenditures and performance metrics will be due to DOA/CFWYI by January 30, 2021.

a. Do dual agencies have to complete two applications?

Yes. They should complete one application for DV funding and one application for SA funding.

b. On Attachment C, Section V: "Certification," who can sign as the "Recipient Fiscal Officer or Other Official?"

This would ideally be a Board Treasurer, CFO, or another official from your organization such as the Executive Director.

c. What is the policy on budget adjustments after we submit our application?

You are allowed a fair amount of adjustment – up to 20% of your budget without approval required. However, it is a good idea to write some flexibility into your application and think in broad terms.

5. What is the grant period?

The grant period is March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020. This means all funding must be spent by December 30, 2020.

6. How can I get more information and assistance?

Workshops and technical assistance sessions for eligible programs will be provided by our coalition partners! [Go to our website for these links.](#)

If you have additional questions, please send them to CFWHB1105CR_FUND@doa.nc.gov

Please consider working with Historically Underutilized Businesses when budgeting for this grant: [Transportation](#), [Website Services and Management](#), [Childcare Services](#), [Catering Services](#), [Language Translation Services](#), [Marketing Services](#).